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SUBJECT: CANADIAN GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS UNIVERSITY ASSISTANCE
TO MALAWI, ETHIOPIA, AND VIETNAM

¶1. Summary: Over the last week, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) announced C\$8 million under its University Partnership in Cooperation and Development program to support Canadian educational institutions to help three developing countries increase their ability to meet local human resource and development needs. The most recent grants will partner two Nova Scotia universities with higher education counterparts in Ethiopia on agriculture and in Vietnam on business management training. The University of Regina will help a Malawi university improve technical training. End Summary.

Ethiopia

¶2. Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC) will receive C\$3 million to help Ethiopian farmers, and the local agriculture and agri-food industries increase the quality and availability of local agricultural products, as well as commercialize agriculture in Ethiopia. "In Ethiopia, there is as much as a 60 percent loss in vegetables and fruit after harvest, said NSAC professor Tessema Astatkie, who will direct the project. "If we can reduce the loss between harvest and consumption by 50 percent, it will mean more food on the table and more money for the farmers as well as helping to reduce poverty."

¶3. NSAC will work with Ethiopia's Jimma University College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine to strengthen its research, training, outreach, and other activities aimed at improving Ethiopia's systems of handling, storing, processing and marketing agricultural products. This includes creating a network of 30 university, industry, government and community groups with expertise and interest in these issues. Researchers will develop low-cost techniques for storing, drying and preserving food and will introduce such techniques to farmers through community outreach programs.

Vietnam

¶4. Saint Mary's University in Nova Scotia will receive C\$2.8 million to assist Vietnam in making the transition from a mainly agrarian economy to one that competes more broadly in the global marketplace. Dr. David Wicks of St. Mary's School of Business said that his school will work with the new Center for Entrepreneurship at the National Economics University in Hanoi to modernize its curriculum to help graduates get jobs in Vietnam's growing business sector.

Malawi

15. The University of Regina in Saskatchewan will use its C\$2.4 million to work with the University of Malawi Polytechnic to update its curriculum and skills training courses to better reflect the needs of Malawi's job market, and will prepare students for employment in the public and private sectors. Dr. Rosetta Khalideen of the University of Regina noted that "we learned that the Polytechnic graduates were having difficulty integrating into the Malawi workforce because they were lacking the technical skills needed by employers. This project will help provide the reorientation sought by our Malawi partners to change that."

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